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Senate

The Senate met at 9:45 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JIM DEMINT, a Senator from the State of South Carolina.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our father and our king, we thank You for the gift of this day. We need Your grace, for we cannot offer anything to merit Your favor or gain Your love. Cover our mistakes and failures with Your merciful love and give us Your peace.

In the beginning of time You created the Heavens and laid the Earth's foundation. Now create in our lawmakers a passion to accomplish Your purposes. May they seek Your wisdom and acknowledge Your precepts. Help them to use Your time-honored principles as the litmus test for good decisions. Give them the desire to so honor You that future generations will praise Your righteous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JIM DEMINT led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,

PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,

Washington, DC, September 26, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JIM DEMINT, a Senator from the State of South Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. DEMINT thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, today we will begin the session with a 1-hour period of morning business. At the conclusion of the morning business period, we will address the pending bill, H.R. 6061, the secure fence legislation.

I filed cloture on the pending amendment and the underlying bill last night, and I will speak to that process in a moment. I do want to remind everyone that the consent agreement now provides that all first-degree amendments to the secure fence bill must be filed at the desk no later than 2:30 today in order to qualify under rule XXII.

Today we will recess from 12:30 to 2:15 in order to accommodate one of our weekly policy meetings.

To further explain, last night I filed an amendment to the secure fence bill, and that amendment included language to establish the military tribunals, the legislation that is in response to the Hamdan legislation from several months ago which the Supreme Court has handed down, which reflects the agreement announced last week between the President and Senate Republicans. I also filed cloture on this amendment last night, as well as cloture on the secure fence bill. There will be a cloture vote Wednesday on the Hamdan amendment. If that cloture on the amendment is invoked, there would

be time for postcloture debate on the amendment. Once all postcloture time is expired, there would then be a vote on the adoption of the amendment, followed immediately by a cloture vote on the secure fence legislation. All those votes would be Thursday.

I explained that last night, and I explain it again now because it illustrates the procedural moves that have to be made in order to finish this bill with certainty before we depart on Friday or Saturday. It is critical that we do so. The very important, critical, high-value interrogation programs cannot continue until we legislate, and indeed the military tribunals, military commissions cannot take place in terms of trying these enemy combatants until we act.

It is important with regard to what I said for people to understand that the Democratic leader and I and our caucuses are working very hard to get a unanimous consent agreement to consider the Hamdan legislation free-standing. However, last night we did not reach that agreement, or early this morning, but I am very hopeful that we can do so shortly.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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